



Tom Lantos

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER**

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Statement of Tom Lantos on the Announcement of Easing of Sanctions Against Libya

Washington, DC – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA), the ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, today commended the Administration for easing some sanctions against Libya, and suggested that recent steps taken by the Libyan governments should be instructive to other countries.

“Libya has moved with impressive speed to rid itself of its weapons of mass destruction and destabilizing missiles,” Lantos said. “I commend the Libyan government for its actions and urge it to establish procedures to give full confidence to the international community that it will not again acquire these weapons. The world is a far safer place as a result of these actions. I hope that rogue states such as Syria and Iran will learn the lesson: responsible behavior means much better relations with the United States.”

Lantos said the Bush Administration’s reported decisions to ease sanctions against Libya are “proper, measured, and merited,” and that they conform to recommendations that he had made since visiting Libya in late January 2004, the first member of Congress to do so in decades, and meeting with its leadership. He noted, however, that not all conditions for normalizing relations with Libya will be met until it addresses its human rights shortcomings and accepts responsibility for its crimes.

“Movement toward normalization with Libya will not mean that we set aside our concerns about ongoing human rights problems in Libya,” Lantos noted. “Likewise, I urge the Libyans to keep in mind that the fullest possible relations with the United States require that they apologize – not merely ‘take responsibility for’ – the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, which resulted in the deaths of 270 innocents in 1988.”

Lantos added that he looks forward to Libya’s taking “whatever final steps are necessary in order to show that it no longer deserves to be included on the list of state-sponsors of terrorism.”

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